

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASH 0245

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

UNCLAS JEC PARIS 07567

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, VS, VN

SUBJECT: PRG HOLDS PRESS CONFERENCE IN PARIS

1. MR. DINH BA THI, ACTING HEAD OF THE PRG DELEGATION TO THE LA CELLE ST. CLOUD TALKS, GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE IN PARIS MARCH 25 ON THE CURRENT SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM. LASTING ABOUT ONE AND A HALF HOURS, THE CONFERENCE WAS WELL ATTENDED BY FRENCH AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS. MANY VIETNAMESE WERE ALSO PRESENT.

2. THI BEGAN BY HAVING HIS INTERPRETER READ A PREPARED STATEMENT BASED ON THE PRG DECLARATION OF MARCH 21 (FBIS SG 210600 AND FOLLOWING). THE MAIN THEME WAS THAT THE CURRENT COMMUNIST MILITARY ACTIONS ARE A JUSTIFIED RESPONSE ("RIPOSTE LEGITIME") TO ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF THE PARIS ACCORD BY THE GVN AND THE US. THE STATEMENT CALLED FOR THE CESSATION OF US "INTERFERENCE" IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND THE OVERTHROW OF "NGUYEN VAN THIEU AND HIS MEN". CONSIDERING ITSELF AS ALWAYS SCRUPULOUSLY ADHERING TO THE PARIS AGREEMENT, THE PRG DECLARED THAT IT WAS READY TO OPEN TALKS ON SOUTH VIETNAM'S FUTURE WITH "A NEW ADMINISTRATION FORMED IN SAIGON FAVORING PEACE, INDEPENDENCE, DEMOCRACY, AND NATIONAL CONCORD".

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3. THI DISTRIBUTED A VARIETY OF OTHER DOCUMENTS PURPORTING TO DESCRIBE THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM AND TO EXPLAIN COMMUNIST AIMS.

4. IN THE QUESTION-AND-ANSWER PERIOD, THI MADE THE FOLLOWING NOTEWORTHY POINTS:

(A) HE SIDESTEPED A QUESTION ON THE PRESENCE OF NVA DIVISIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM BY CALLING REPORTS ABOUT SUCH DIVISIONS "FALSE AND SLANDEROUS" AND BY SAYING THAT THE PARIS ACCORD REFUTES THE EXISTENCE OF SUCH TROOPS. HE ADDED THAT NATURALLY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE SUPPORT THE PRG'S STRUGGLE, BECAUSE THEY ARE "LIKE BROTHERS".

(B) CONCERNING THE ARMS SUPPLIED TO BOTH SIDES IN SOUTH VIETNAM, HE DECLARED ONE COULD NOT COMPARE THE HELP GIVEN BY PEOPLE IN MANY COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE US, TO THE "JUST" PRG STRUGGLE WITH THE ARMAMENTS FURNISHED BY THE USG TO THE GVN.

(C) HE SAID THE PRG WAS READY TO REOPEN THE TALKS AT LA CELLE ST. CLOUD WITH A SUITABLE NEW ADMINISTRATION IN SAIGON. HE STRESSED THE PRG'S INTENTION TO FOLLOW THE PATH TOWARD PEACE OUTLINED IN THE PARIS ACCORD.

(D) ASKED TO SPECIFY WHOM HE MEANT BY "THIEU'S MEN", HE SIMPLY SAID THEY WERE "A VERY SMALL NUMBER".

(E) HE SALUTED OPPOSITION GROUPS IN SOUTH VIETNAM WHO PERFORM ANTI-US AND ANTI-THIEU ACTIVITIES, WHOEVER THEY MAY BE. HE PRAISED THE "THIRD FORCE" AND SAID IT HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN THE SETTLEMENT. (A "THIRD FORCE" REPRESENTATIVE IN THE AUDIENCE DISTRIBUTED A DECLARATION SIGNED BY SUCH "THIRD FORCE" PERSONALITIES AS THICH THIEN CHAU, TRAN DINH LAN, HO THONG MINH, AND NGUYEN HUU CHAU. THIS DISTRIBUTION WAS POSSIBLY BY PREARRANGEMENT AND OBVIOUSLY WITH THE APPROVAL OF THI.)

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(F) HE SAID NO DECISION HAD BEEN REACHED ON A CAPITAL FOR THE PRG, EITHER AT HUE OR ELSEWHERE.

5. WE ARE POUCHING TO EA/VN AND EMBASSY SAIGON ALL DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED AT THE CONFERENCE, INCLUDING THAT OF THE "THIRD FORCE".
WILLIAMS

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NNN

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